

ground for so many African Americans who followed in his footsteps.

Last week, it was announced there will be a House exhibition entitled, "Joseph Rainey: 150 Years." The exhibition shares Rainey's impact from the 1870s through the 1970s. The power and importance of voting rights are at the heart of the exhibition, which tells this tumultuous history through objects, images, documents, and words of African-American Members of Congress who have lived and legislated through it.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Congratulations to President Donald Trump for leading South Carolina Republicans to the most success in 140 years since Congressman Rainey began the Republican Party.

#### PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, marked the 79th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor naval base attack.

On December 7, 1941, the surprise attack by the Japanese on a U.S. Naval base in Hawaii left nearly 2,500 people dead. Innocent lives were taken; members of the United States Navy, Army, Marines, as well as civilians. It remains one of the deadliest attacks in American history, often described as "a date which will live in infamy," according to a quote by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Every year on December 7, we pause to reflect and remember the sacrifice made by the men and women who perished in the attack on Pearl Harbor. President Roosevelt went on to say, "No matter how long it will take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory."

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the selflessness and sacrifice of the Greatest Generation, that is exactly what they did. God bless all of our Pearl Harbor victims, the survivors, and their families.

#### A JUST AND PROPER FIGHT

(Mr. GAETZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the NDAA, not because I am against our troops, but because I love them so much.

America's fighting men and women are so precious that they should not have to die in some failed state, some faraway land that most Americans can't even point to on a map so that defense contractors can extend our involvement in these wars, so that lobbyists can get rich, and so that Members of Congress can get reelected.

This good bill has been hijacked by the forever war lobby and their bought-and-paid-for allies in the United States Congress. It puts barriers in the way of an administration that wants to bring our troops home and put America first. This legislation has become too swampy. It does good things to ensure that America can vanquish any foe on the battlefield, but we should only fight when that fight is just and proper.

Mr. Speaker, we have spent two decades trading the same villages back and forth in Afghanistan. And I believe that the administration that leads our country should work to bring those troops home, and unfortunately, this bill does exactly the opposite. From Afghanistan, from Germany, and elsewhere, I am going to put America first and I am voting against this bill.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 6395, WILLIAM M. (MAC) THORNBERRY NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of December 3, 2020, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 6395) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Thursday, December 3, 2020, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of December 3, 2020, at Book II, page H6145.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the conference report to accompany H.R. 6395.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the conference report before us today. This is the defense policy bill, and this is an incredibly important piece of legislation. There is a lot of public debate about different issues that sort of rise to the level of people

arguing about, and they are very important, passionate issues. But lost in that sometimes is the basic substance of what we do in the defense policy bill, and that is, we exercise our legislative authority to do oversight of the Pentagon and national security policy.

And on that measure, this year's bill is an incredibly important piece of legislation. To begin with, we address the issue of diversity within the military. I really want to thank the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, specifically ANTHONY BROWN, VERONICA ESCOBAR, and RUBEN GALLEGOS for putting forward policy that will address the diversity problems that we have.

Mr. Speaker, our military right now in its leadership and in its recruitment does not adequately reflect the diversity of this country. This bill puts in place a chief diversity officer at the Pentagon and takes a number of other steps to try to correct that, to make sure that we have a military that reflects diversity of this country and that meets the equity and social justice requirements. I think that is an incredibly important policy statement, and a step forward.

We also implement a number of the provisions from a defense policy board led by Eric Schmidt and Bob Work focusing on artificial intelligence. I heard some Members speaking earlier about the importance of that. We have a series of recommendations for how the Department of Defense can do a better job of getting AI right, developing the technology and using it, but also broader technologies as well. The Pentagon is woefully behind right now in taking advantage of the technologies that are crucial to getting us the proper defense going forward. I think that is incredibly important.

Mr. Speaker, we also have a provision that Ranking Member THORNBERRY worked on. It is not the most sexy or exciting thing in the world. It is 300 pages of cleaning up the technical problems within the acquisition process at the Pentagon, but it is crucially important.

We have so many innovative technologies, so many small businesses out there that are generating great ideas that would be terrific for the Pentagon, but they can't get in. They can't penetrate the bureaucracy and figure out how to even do business, so most of them walk away. It is crucially important that we take steps to fix that.

We also have a provision I have worked on a lot dealing with satellites and launch. Same thing—encourage competition, encourage innovation. Regrettably, the Pentagon has a somewhat understandable bias towards incumbents. They also have a bias towards large companies. But what that does is it makes it harder for that innovation, for those new technologies that are crucial to get through. We make changes to address that.

We also have a provision in this bill to deal with Agent Orange, to make